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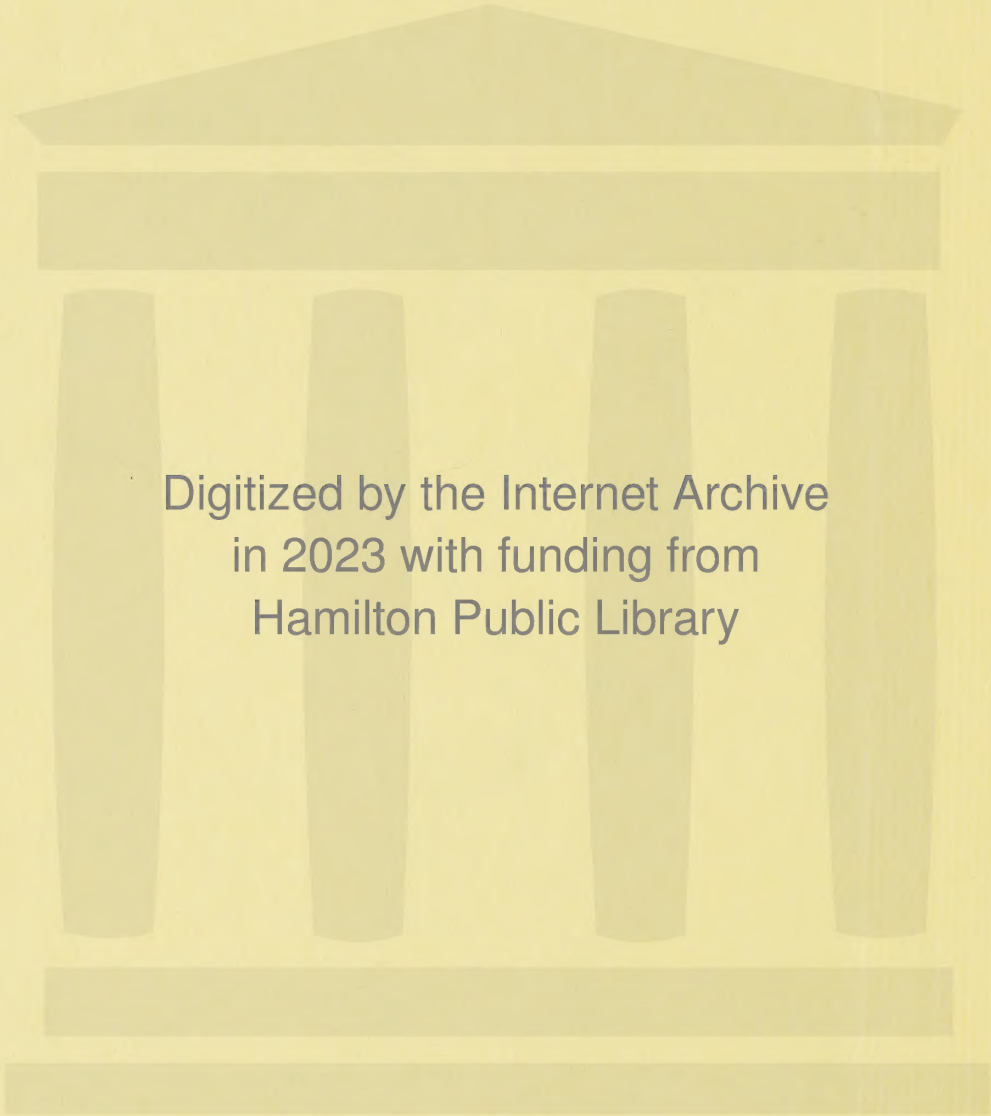

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American Society for the
Memorial of the American
Society for the
Encouragement of Domestic
1817.

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MEMORIAL

Of the American Society for the encouragement of Domestic Manufactures.

January 29, 1817.

Referred to the committee of Commerce and Manufactures.

To the Honourable the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States. in Congress assembled—the memorial of the American Society for the encouragement of Domestic Manufactures

RESPECTFULLY REPRESENTS.....

That your memorialists viewing the depressed condition of our manufactures, and the general distress occasioned thereby, have associated for the purpose of investigating the causes and seeking for and applying the remedy; and having considered the subject have been led to the conviction that nothing short of the timely and efficient interposition of government can rescue our domestic manufactures from irreparable ruin. We, therefore, solicit the attention of the representatives of the nation and the guardians of its welfare, to the following statement which we are confident will be found to be correct:

During the long war which embroiled the European nations this country was led by circumstances into extensive foreign commerce, and, being the only neutral commercial nation, that commerce was lucrative and beneficial, and government made it the medium through which to collect the revenue. But when the aggressions of Great Britain made an appeal to arms necessary, we found ourselves dependant on the enemy even for the munitions of war and clothing of our armies. The procurement of these essential supplies induced an illicit trade which not only drained our country of its specie, but tended to extinguish patriotism, demoralize the people, and degrade our national character. The necessities of the nation then called for domestic manufactures as the only remedy for evils so great; and adventurous and patriotic individuals, relying on the permanent protection which they were led to believe government would afford to domestic industry, embarked largely in manufacturing establishments—insomuch that the capital employed in machinery, buildings, and carrying on two branches of manufactures, alone, amounted to one hundred millions of dollars.

It is admitted that the national legislature, at its last session, bestowed upon this subject a wise and liberal consideration, and granted such encouragement as was by many then deemed sufficient, but which experience has since proved inadequate.

Your memorialists beg leave to state that, since the peace in Europe, the policy of its continental powers, acting each for its respective interest, in interdicting British manufactures has caused them to overflow upon our markets to a very alarming degree; and if England was before this crisis willing to encounter immense voluntary losses, in the hope of destroying our manufactures, by glut-

ting our market, how much more animated must her efforts now be when her goods lie upon her hands, and despair urges her forward. But, notwithstanding all these disadvantages, we are confident that if our government continue to make this branch of domestic industry a child of its affection—if it be understood, both at home and abroad, that it is never to be abandoned and deserted—the struggle will not be long; we shall become able to compete with the full power of our adversary; our capitalists will no longer be restrained by fear, and foreigners no longer fed with the hope of our ruin.

We beg leave to add, that it is not our manufacturers alone that suffer in this juncture, but our merchants are equally discomfited; and whilst our country is felicitating itself on the reduction of its national debt, this state of things is involving us in a debt much greater, and more ruinous because due to a foreign nation whose policy it is to use it to our disadvantage—a debt which will impoverish our country, because it cannot be liquidated by any means in our power, as our surplus produce will go but a small way to discharge it, and to pay it in specie is utterly impossible.

Again; we find it usual for the foreign merchant to send his goods, invoiced at reduced prices, to one of his agents in this country, who, having entered them, delivers them for sale into the hands of another agent who is furnished with the true invoice. The owner is beyond the reach of our laws; he who enters them affects to know nothing of them except through the medium of the invoice he receives; he who holds the true invoice has no agency in their entry: thus they all elude the penalties of the law, and our revenue, our merchants, and manufacturers become the common victims of foreign frauds.

Added to this, sales at auction are extremely inimical to our mercantile and manufacturing interests: this mode of sale, besides affording to foreign agents an early harvest of the fruits of their frauds. gives to them advantages in which the regular merchant cannot participate—advantages prohibited to them in their own country; the wise policy of which interdicts, (except in a few instances,) all sales at auction, owing to their evil effects on their mercantile and manufacturing interests. By this mode of sale the fair merchant is stripped of all the advantages which a necessary establishment, large advances, and a long course of honourable dealings had acquired to them, whilst strangers, bound by no ties to this country, who bear none of its burdens, perform no civil duties, nor any services in peace or war—who are not at the expense even of store-rent or clerk-hire, who are so transitory as to be scarcely amenable to our laws, are enabled to monopolise our money and our markets; by which means our merchants are obliged, in many instances, to sacrifice their goods through the same channel in order to pay their bonds for duties to the government: and many are induced, in moments of distress, to raise money by sales at auction, and by thus concealing their insolvent circumstances for a time, involve themselves and their benefactors in ruin.

Without presuming to say what further encouragement would be an adequate protection for our manufacturing establishments. we deem it proper to suggest the expediency of the following measures, viz:

First; That the duties imposed by the tariff at the last session of Congress, instead of being limited to two years, be made permanent:

Second; That the importation of cotton goods

manufactured beyond the Cape of Good Hope, be prohibited:

Third; That the revenue laws be revised, and so modified as to prevent smuggling, false invoices, and other frauds on the revenue:

Fourth: That a duty of ten per cent. be laid on all auction-sales of foreign goods, with the exception of the estates of bankrupts, insolvents, persons deceased, and sheriffs' and marshals' sales:

Fifth; That it be recommended to the officers of the army and navy, and to all our civil officers, to use American fabrics.

And your memorialists further request, in behalf of the manufacturers, such additional aid and protection as will place them beyond that foreign influence which aims at their destruction.

And your memorialists, as in duty bound, will ever pray, &c.

By order of the Society.

DANIEL D. TOMPKINS, *President*,
S. VAN RENSSELAER, 1*st vice president*,
W. FEW, 2*d vice president*,
JOHN FERGUSON, 3*d vice president*,
D. LYNCH, jun.
PETER H. SCHENCK, } *secretaries*.

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